

TRIBUTE TO DEPUTY RICH OWEN

(Mr. HUTCHINSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, last November, deputies and employees of the Benton County Sheriff's Office in Arkansas voted Rich Owen Deputy of the Year. They selected him for the award, they noted, because of his outstanding professionalism and devotion to helping others. Within days of that vote, Deputy Owen died in the line of duty. He died from injuries he received in an auto accident while responding to a burglary call.

This week is National Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial Week, a time dedicated to the memory of heroes like Rich Owen, men and women who gave their lives serving and protecting others. I am at once proud and at the same time sad to pay tribute to these officers. I am proud that Arkansas has produced such courageous individuals as Deputy Owen, but I am sad that some have paid such an awful price for that dedication.

I would like to pay special tribute to Deputy Owen's son, Brandon, who is with me here today. And I offer my condolences to Brandon's mother, Frankie Owen, as well. These two stand as a constant reminder of the sacrifices not only our police officers pay every day, but their families as well. They stand here today as a reminder of the debt the rest of us owe to our law enforcement community. The courage we pay tribute to here today is not only that of the officers, but of their families as well. The sacrifices they make are great.

GENETIC INFORMATION NON-DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTH INSURANCE ACT

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, scientists recently announced a breakthrough in the treatment of cancer, one of the deadliest and most common diseases plaguing humanity. A combination of two drugs has been shown to prevent tumors from spawning the growth of new blood vessels that allow the tumor to grow.

The advances in genetic testing now allows us to pinpoint people who are at high risk for common cancers like breast cancer and colorectal cancer. Tragically, however, people are afraid to take those genetic tests that would allow them to take advantage of new anti-cancer drugs at the earliest possible phases of cancer. They refuse to take these tests because they fear genetic discrimination, especially in health insurance.

Congress could solve the problem by passing H.R. 306, The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Health Insur-

ance Act, which has 200 bipartisan sponsors. To date, however, we have not been able to get a schedule to vote on this proposal; and, as a result, Americans are forced to make a Hobson's choice between learning vital health information and risking their health insurance.

I urge my colleagues to demand a vote on H.R. 306 to protect all of our constituents against genetic discrimination and allow them to make health decisions based on sound medical facts.

FREEDOM FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION ACT

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today the House will vote on the freedom from religious persecution bill, which covers only cases of torture, enslavement, abduction, and death.

Noted Russian Jewish dissident Natan Sharansky said, "When the West stood up for its most basic values," as this bill does, "and spoke up for persecuted Soviet Jewish communities, Soviet chains around churches and political dissidents began to shatter."

Noted Chinese dissident Wei Jingsheng sent a letter yesterday and said, "If I did not see it myself, even I would not imagine the shameful and despicable means the Communists use against believers."

This bill gives the President total and complete waiver authority. Cardinal O'Connor of New York, in a letter yesterday said, "The Freedom from Religious Persecution Act could begin the desperately needed process of ending the legitimizing of such persecution."

Failure to pass the bill would send a message to all of the dictators all over the world that it is open season for people of all religious beliefs. I hope and I pray that this bill will pass with an almost unanimous vote.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

(Mr. KANJORSKI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and perhaps I should ask for a moment of silence because the vote that was taken to table the privileged resolution from the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) is a sad moment in the House of Representatives.

I have the distinct honor and pleasure of serving on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. The fact that we have had a difficult time in the administration of our mission over the last 18 months is evident to everyone in this Chamber and everyone in this Nation.

The privileged resolution would have given this House the opportunity to air the problems in that committee and to attempt to find a solution so that we

could move on in our mission of adequate investigation of financial and campaign finance violations of the 1996 election.

I think, as a result of our failure to use the debate process on that privileged resolution, we will find that May 14, 1998, by a vote of 223-196, this House has decided not to reform campaign finance but to start the political campaign of 1998.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN PAKISTAN

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of a person imprisoned because of his religious beliefs in Pakistan.

Recently, a Pakistani Christian, Ayub Masih, was sentenced to death under Pakistan's blasphemy law. In Pakistan, no one has yet been officially executed under the blasphemy law. However, extremists have killed a number of accused believers.

On May 6, 1998, human rights activist Bishop John Joseph allegedly committed suicide to protest the blasphemy law and Masih's death sentence. Although the Pakistani Constitution protects freedom of religion, the blasphemy law contradicts the constitution and a number of international human rights standards.

Mr. Speaker, every person, every country in the world should have this fundamental human right, the freedom of religion. I urge the Pakistani Government to acquit Mr. Ayub Masih and release him from prison with full protection of his rights and to protect him and his family.

TIME FOR CHAIRMAN BURTON TO STEP DOWN AS HEAD OF INVESTIGATION

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to decry the use of taxpayer funds for an investigation that has in fact turned into nothing more than a partisan political witch hunt.

According to yesterday's Washington Post, the investigation of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) "began more than a year ago and has cost several million dollars," yet has "produced little information beyond what was disclosed during a similar investigation by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee."

Meanwhile, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) has blatantly abused his power by unilaterally issuing over 500 subpoenas, releasing tapes of personal, private conversations and altering the content of those tapes to suit his own political purposes.

It is time to restore some integrity to this investigation. It is time to end